THE DAY OF THE LORD

PART 1

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Well the last time that I was here was back in September 19th during the Feast of Trumpets. And, on that occasion along with other numerous occasions I tempted to point out that understanding prophecy is NOT THE KEY to eternal life and admission into the Kingdom of God. In 1st Corinthians chapter 13 where Paul said, 'Well, we know in part, we prophesy in part.' Said, 'Now we see through a glass darkly.' And he spoke about the importance of godly love. Overcoming everything. And, there are some other fundamental's – and I just want to remind us, most of the people reading this will well know these. I'm sort-of preaching to the choir, but, there may be some people out there who haven't heard the Owensboro Church of Jesus Christ that long. I just want to point out the things that we need to keep in mind, always, when we talk about prophecy.

The Words of Jesus Christ in **Matthew 4:4** – *'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'* And Paul in 2nd Timothy the third chapter said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine." And also in 2nd Timothy the second chapter Paul said, "Study …" obviously study the Bible, the Scriptures, "to show yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth."

And, in **verse 16** of *that* same chapter he said, "But shun profane and idle babblings." Also, Jesus Christ referred to the concept of 'profane babblings,' I think, when He talked about 'the traditions of men.' In **Mark chapter 7**, He talked about, 'you keep the traditions of men – the commandments of men – and you forget the Law of God.' And He WARNED how that was such a terrible mistake!

Paul, in the Book of **Titus** was very blunt in the first chapter. He said, 'not giving heed to JEWISH fables and the commandments [or the traditions] of men.' And you just gotta keep it in mind. In order to understand prophecy, we need to look at the WORD OF GOD!

I was thinking the other day – on the south wall of Ambassador Hall, out at Ambassador College in Pasadena, California - the old Merritt Mansion, in which was the very building I was baptized way back in 1969 – inscribed into the wall "*The Word of God is the foundation of all knowledge.*" How many remember seeing that!? And every so often my mind goes back to *that* and stopping at *that*, and looking up at *that*, and sort-of pondering *that*.

Well, Peter, in **2nd Peter chapter 1, verse 20** said, "knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation." And yet we have people out there on the highways and byways of the United States and around the world who want to get into "private interpretations" of prophecy. And it's a mistake! And unfortunately it can be a DEADLY mistake! And they want to get into traditions, and JEWISH FABLES, and things in which they really should not be doing! Well, the real KEY to understanding the Bible and understanding Bible prophecy is given to us in the Book of Isaiah.

Isaiah chapter 28, verse 9 – "'Whom will He teach knowledge? And whom will He make to understand [doctrine]?'" And then it says in **Verse 10** – I think this is such an important concept in the idea of understanding what the Bible really says and understanding doctrine – "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little.'" - and then just to repeat it, down in **Verse 13**, he said, "But the Word of the LORD was to them, 'Precept upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little.'" And so, *nowhere in the Bible* do you just open it up and It gives up points 1, 2, 3, 4, or points A, B, C, D – all nicely outlined. You have to do a little research and you have to sort-of piece together, as it were, a jigsaw puzzle. The Bible was compiled – inspired by God – in such a fashion and in such a manner that Its deep spiritual truths and meanings, and mysteries, could not be understood by the natural carnal mind. Mind's which are not being led, taught, and guided, and inspired by God's Holy Spirit. Unless led by God, the

Bible is a giant multi-layered puzzle. Mystery. Enigma. Conundrum. And this was arranged and ordered by God as an act of mercy. The people of the world – the people who are devoid of God's truth – past and present, people who have not been called and chosen, they are *not* facing eternal judgment and the prospect of the second death. They are safe in their state of Biblical and spiritual ignorance, waiting for a future era of time, when they too will receive the blessings of understanding the truth of God, and eventually being admitted into the Kingdom of God! And Jesus Christ talked about this back in Matthew chapter 13.

I've told the story before, how my good friend, Michael Partridge, who lives back in Evansville – when I had moved back from Arizona and I was now living in Kentucky. One evening I went over to see Mike and Annie in Evansville, and we went to a very nice Mexican food restaurant. As we finished eating Annie says, "O' Washington Square Mall is right across the street, let's go over there and walk and get some exercise!" And I thought, "Well, alright, I'm not against that." So we drove over to Washington Square Mall, at which point Mike and I sat down and Annie took off walking. And about forty-five minutes later or an hour later, Annie came back with three or four shopping bags on her arms. And I thought, "Aha! Now I know what it means when we walk for exercise! I understand the lingo now!" And she gets irritated every time I tell that story, but I love the story! Anyway, as she was wandering off to the stores and shops, Michael became very frustrated and he said, "Why don't more people believe God!?" And he added, "Why do we have a society which says, 'In God We Trust,' and yet most of the people around us just seemingly don't care what the Bible says or God says!? Or, they don't do what He says!?" And, Michael was really quite upset over that idea. And I said, "Mike, you gotta keep something in mind." And we all, ever so often, we have to stop and go, "Mmmm, alright, alright, I get it!" I said, "Mike, let's go back and talk about what Jesus said." And I went back to the concept of **Matthew 13**. **Verse 10** – "And the disciples came and said to Him, …" – not the general public, but the disciples, the "called-out ones." "and said to Him, 'Why do You speak to them in parables [or puzzles]?'" You know, most people think that Jesus spoke parables to make difficult concepts easy to understand. I remember being taught that in my little Sunday school class. "Parables, you know, makes it easy for even the lowly people to

understand." And yet, the Bible says something totally different! Jesus, in His own Words, says, "…'Because it has been given to you …'" – it is given unto people who have been called by God, and that's not everyone in this age. And I know that the people outside of our organization don't understand that. I know that my Baptist friends and my Catholic friends and my Methodist friends probably presume, "Well, I've been called," although I actually don't think they think about that idea. But they don't know the truth of God. And people struggle with the idea that Jesus Christ came to the Earth to 'save all of humanity'! At His first coming!? No, He did not! He came to call out a few people, and He has throughout the ages. Most of those people will be *saved* – as it were. Taught the truth of God, granted God's Spirit. In later eras of time – and we talked about *that* during the Feast of Trumpets and the Days of Unleavened Bread and the Last Great Day, and that's a topic for another sermon. But to the mass majority right now they were not meant to understand the truth. He says in **Verse 13** – "'Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. **14**) And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: *'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive;* **15**) *For the hearts of this people have grown dull* [or hardened]. *Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and* [should be converted], *So that I should heal them.'*" – and some day He will break off those bonds of not being able to 'hear' or 'see.' He says in **Verse 16** – "'But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; **17**) for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not [or were not allowed to] see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.'" – so, we are a very fortune people, and that's one of the reasons why on this season of Thanksgiving we should have a special sense of thanksgiving to God.

The End-Time Events

Well, today I'd like to continue our exploration in discussing what I like to call 'the end-time events' or 'the end-time trauma.' Or what the Bible seems to indicate, simply called 'the Day of the LORD.' If you would, turn to Matthew 24.

It says in **Matthew chapter 24** – and you know, the key question here is **Verse 3**, "'Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming [of Your Return], and of the end of the *world*?'" – and again, that's not the end of the world, that means the end of the age – it's the end of a period of time. The end of man's rulership upon the Earth. And He went through, 'take heed that no one deceives you. **5**) For many will come in My name, saying. 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.' And sure enough there are! How many hundreds and hundreds of different versions of "Christianity" do we have in the world today!? And how many times they are so very far apart! Almost irreconcilable. And then you think about all the other religions that have popped up, that hold people in their grips. Then He said in **Verse 6** – "'And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars.'" – and since my birth in 1950, when the Korean War was heating up, my life has been filled with the knowledge of war. My television set has been filled with nightly reports of war. You think about the Korean War (1950-1953), that saga of the Vietnam War (1955-1975), it captured most of my youth, and preoccupied the thoughts of many of my buddies. I can remember sitting in locker rooms discussing with my friends Denny Luise, Dennis Waters, other guys that I played sports with. And we actually said, "Well, I wonder, when we get out of high school, will we be drafted and end-up in the rice patties of Vietnam!?" And we pondered that, and it was a bit of an oppressive time. He goes on to say, "…'See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. **7**) For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.'" – and you know there are people in this nation and around the world who would love to see a "ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT." Whatever that monstrosity would be! And yet, Bible prophecy doesn't indicate that it will actually get here – although people will be trying to make it happen. But you more see the idea of blocs of nations, group of nations – the European combine and the Islamic confederation, or,

caliphate, however you wanna call it – yet to fully develop! You know you have the king's of the east mentioned in the Bible – so you have sort-of big groupings of nations. And here we see, 'nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.' And, I'm willing to accept the possibility that this is Jesus Christ suggesting about the prophecy of Daniel 11. The king of the North vs the king of the South. The European combine and the Islamic confederation – whatever they will call themselves in the future. I think this is an indication of that growing tension between these two groups of people. "…'And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. **8**) All these are the beginning of sorrows.'" So in all of this, it's a step by step progress – over here something happens, over there something happens. And as you read the Bible and you sort-of get the feeling that it grows in intensity! As time goes by. There are other Scriptures there in Matthew 24 – notice **Verse 15** – "'Therefore when you see the *'abomination of desolation,'* spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place' (whoever reads, let him understand), **16**) 'then let those who are in JUDEA flee to the mountains.'" – and unfortunately a few decades ago, some church people, took that to mean if you live in the United States, you go pack your bags and go scramble off to a little place in the middle of nowhere called Petra. And that really was a bizarre concept! I don't really know how that really took hold, but it did. And people, even to this day, are staking their *physical* future, their *spiritual* future, on this concept of fleeing to Petra. And in fact, if they ever got there, they probably would be machine gunned by the local soldiers – the Jordanian soldiers. **Verse 21** – "'For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.'" – and the Worldwide Church of God took a little liberty with this phrase and put the word "the" in there, and they came up with a phrase – ***the** great tribulation*. How many of you can remember that expression!? Heard it all the time back in the old days. The Bible doesn't exactly say *that*! It says they'll be 'great troubles.'

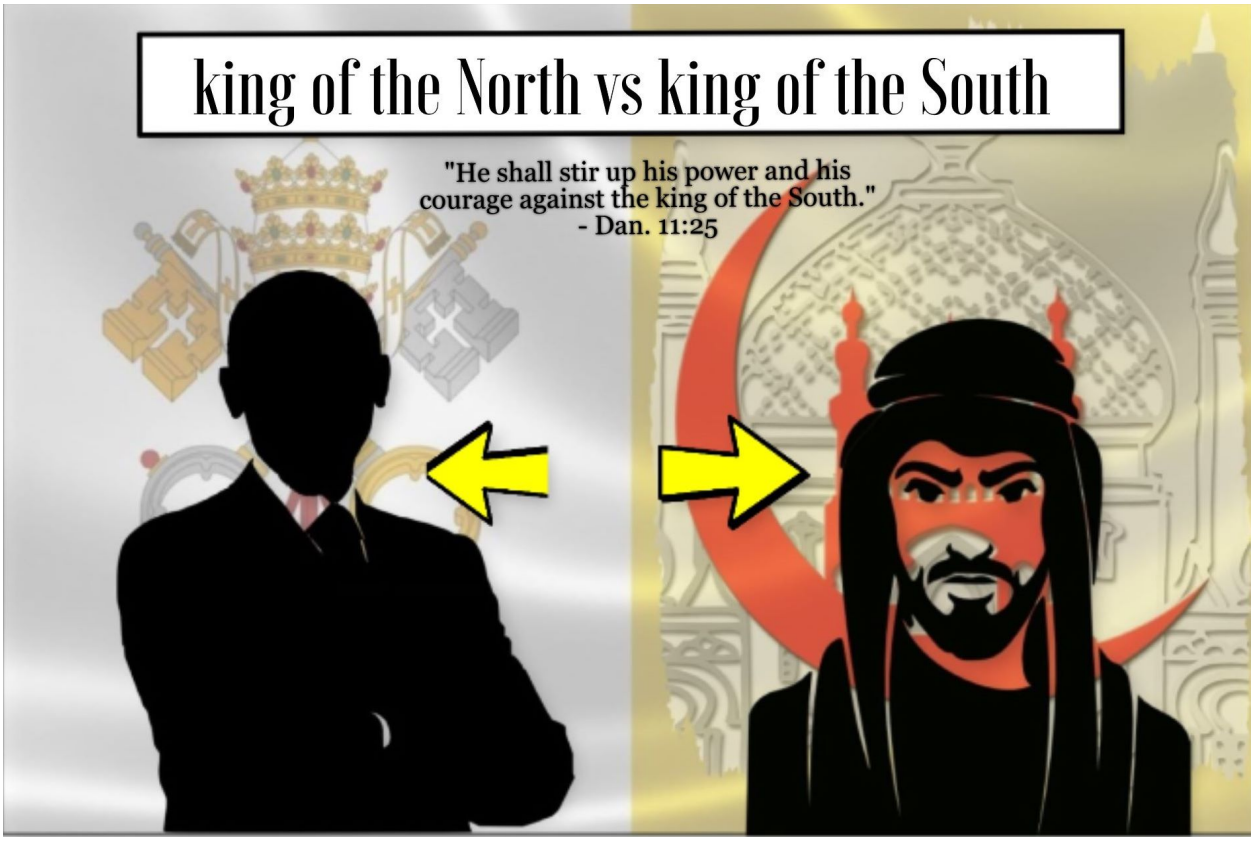
Well, if you turn to **Mark chapter 13** – which is Mark's version of the "Olivet Prophecy." He says in **Verse 8** – "…'These are the beginnings of sorrows.'" He uses that phrase again. And he also, **Verse 14**, talks about the *'abomination of desolation.'* And then, in **Verse 19**, he refers to it as

'tribulation.' He doesn't say "great tribulation" – he says in the King James English, 'days of affliction' or 'trouble.'

And then in **Luke chapter 21**, Luke's version of the "Oliver Prophecy." In **Verse 9** we hear the phrase 'wars and commotions,' instead of 'wars and rumors of wars.' And think about all the commotions that we hear about on a daily basis – and worldwide events! And then in **Verse 20** there's an interesting little addition to this prophetic scenario. "'But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.'" – and that's a little key I think we have to put in back of our mind! And then in **Verse 22** of Luke's version, he talks about the 'days of vengeance.' Doesn't say, "great tribulation" and he doesn't say 'days of affliction' – he says, the 'days of vengeance.' And the question is – who's vengeance!? And I contend that it's probably talking about GOD'S VENGENCE! God's justice! A progression of events that lead to the Day of the LORD!

Now, let's quickly go back and look at chapter 21, verse 20 – we have read this for a long time, and I must confess I've read it - just sort-of passed over it and maybe lumped two ideas together that maybe I should not have lumped together. "'But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.'" If you would, turn back to the Book of Daniel. And we all just sort-of presumed, "Well, that's the European army surrounding Jerusalem" – because we know Daniel 11 says they're gonna be there. But, not necessarily so! Notice that all of **Daniel 11** is a constant flow of conflict between the king of the North and the king of the South! And I think that we understand those Scriptures to mean the king of the North (a future European combine; Catholic Europe) – which is taking shape right now! And yet, receiving very little notice on the world stage. And, the king of the South (a yet future Islamic confederation). One of the keys is to look at **Verse 9** – "'Also *the king of the North* shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land. **10**) However *his sons* shall stir up strife, …'" – talking about multiple nations that make up this Islamic confederation. Not just Arabic people, but now we know that Islam stretches far to the east of the traditionally Arabic people. [1]

1. See: The Prophecy Series – The Last Crusade also speaks of this possible connection between Luke 21:20 and Daniel 11, involving the prophetic 'king of the North' and the 'king of the South.' pgs. 11, 12, 15.



And stretches all the way into Southern Asia and Indonesia. And then, **Verse 25** – you hear this type of phrase – and this is so indicative of the narrative which takes place in Daniel 11. "'He [the king of the North] shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army. And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army.'" So this is a growing conflict. And then notice **Verse 31** – "'And forces shall be mustered by him [the king of the North], and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; and they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.'" – or, 'that makes desolate,' remember Jesus said, 'you read about this in the Book of Daniel.' And here we read one of several places that talks about it. And then down in **Verse 36** – "'Then the king [meaning a leader of the European people] shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath [the Day of the LORD] has been accomplished; …'"

Now, sometimes you hear people say, "Well, Jerusalem, encompassed with armies!" Maybe those are Arab armies!? And there may well be a continuance of Arab armies surrounding Jerusalem!? There always seemed to be. But the actual people who seem to go in and set-up the 'abomination of desolation' appear to be the European people. The European army. And to just help understand this, turn to 2nd Thessalonians. And again, for you old timers – I say that respectfully – we've read these before. **2nd Thessalonians chapter 2** – but there may be people who have never heard these ideas, talked about, or explained. Paul says the following, "Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ …" – so, again, the time setting on this passage is the time of the end! The Return of Jesus Christ! And of all the things that Paul was, evangelist, minister, writer of the Bible, he was also – and we don't think about this too often – a prophet! A prophet of God used to explain about future events. **Verse 2** – "not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ [the Day of the LORD!] [is at hand]. **3**) Let no one deceive you by any means; …" – and that even means people who get into their own private interpretations of prophecy. Do not let them get inside your head and confuse you and deceive you and mislead you. He said, "…unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, …" – this is talking about, I believe, a future religious leader from the homeland of Europe, practicing the historic religion of Europe, who claims – and notice… THIS IS THE ABOMINATION THAT MAKES DESOLATE! **Verse 4** – "who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits *as* God in the temple of God, showing himself that he *is* God." – and that is just an absolute outrage in the eyes of God! And this is what Daniel chapter 11, verse 36 is talking about!

Daniel chapter 11, verse 40 – "'At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; …'" – notice that, 'with many ships.'

Now, we have a PDF booklet online entitled Prophecy Series – The Last Crusade, in which I discuss the Crusades. And most of the crusades of the Middle Ages went over the land – like over Greece into Turkey – a few came by ship. But it seems to indicate to me *here* that most of the invasion into the Middle East will be across the Mediterranean Sea. "…and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through. **41**) He shall also enter the Glorious Land [meaning Jerusalem], and many countries shall be overthrown; but these [and I'll add the word – *initially*] shall escape from his hand." - it specifically says that Edom (which we believe to be Turkey), Moab (which we believe is sort-of Syria and Iraq), and the chief of the children of Ammon (or Jordan). It says these people will not first incur the wrath of Europe! **Verse 42** - "'He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape.'" – seems like it's almost a focal point of the invasion. **43**) He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall [be at his sides]." Now notice **Verse 44**. It's almost we go forward a few weeks, months, and we read, "'But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; …'" – and so let's set the scene – this vast armada crosses the ocean, lands on Egypt, comes up from the south, enters into the Palestinian area of Jerusalem (Judea), and then it says, 'news from the east and the north shall trouble him.' Well, to the north you have countries like Syria, Turkey. And to the east you have like Saudi Arabia, and Iraq. What if Europe comes in, sets up control in Jerusalem, and then those other Islamic states counter attack!? "… he [this European combine] shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many." – to just 'sweep them away' as my margin says! So I believe they come in over the ocean and they set-up in Israel, they set-up the 'abomination of desolation' – these northern and eastern Arab countries say, "We're not gonna put up with *that*!" They try and force an invasion and cause trouble, and they're wiped out! And as it says here, they're just simply 'annihilated.'

Well, as we've already mentioned, statements in the "Olivet Prophecy," the Book of Daniel, and the flow of the Book of Revelation, seem to indicate that the end-time traumatic events occur in a series of steps! Or, in a progression of events!

And I can remember being back in Ambassador College at the Worldwide Church of God and it seemed like they always talked about everything happening *at once*. And I don't see it quite that way. It seems to me like it happens a little here, and then it moves to another location to another group of people, and before its over it encompasses the whole world!

I want to give you a quick overview of how I think this progression will go.

1) I think *the first people* to take it on the chin, who are seriously afflicted, are what we would called Israel (Ephraim and Manasseh), and I think we understand who those nations are. And, Judah. In the Book of Jeremiah, chapter 37, calls it 'Jacob's trouble.' So, it seems like Israel (Ephraim, Manasseh) and Judah are really the first people to be overcome!

2) And then, I think *the next people* to be badly afflicted are the Western portions of the Islamic confederation. We just read about this in Daniel 11. The nations of Egypt, Edom (Turkey), Moab (Syria/Iraq), Ammon (Jordan). And you know, we're told in the **Book of Obadiah**, that these people are simply wiped out! **Verse 8** – "'Will I not in that day,' says the LORD, 'Even destroy the wise men from Edom [Edom, Esau, Turkey, they all mean the same], And understanding from the mountains of Esau?'" – and the reason that God seems to single out Turkey 1) He looks upon them as Jacob's brother. Remember Esau and Jacob were brothers. And, at the time of the end, notice **Verse 10** – "'For violence against your brother Jacob, Shame shall cover you, And you shall be cut off forever. **11**) In the day that you stood on the other side – In the day that strangers [the people of Europe] carried captive his forces, When foreigners entered his gates And cast lots for Jerusalem – Even you were as one of them.'" **Verse 12** – "'But you should not have gazed on the day of your brother In the day of his captivity; Nor should you have rejoiced over the children of Judah [modern-day Israel] In the day of their destruction; Nor should you have spoken proudly In the day of distress. **13**) You should not have entered the gate of My people In the day of their calamity. Indeed, you should not have gazed on their affliction In the day of their calamity, Nor laid hands on their substance In the day of their calamity. **14**) You should not have stood at the crossroads To cut off those among them who escaped; …'" – and it seems as though the people of

modern-day Israel (Judah) as they see this trouble coming, some of them try to escape, they go north, they want to escape over into Europe. And it seems that Turkey stands 'at the crossroads' at that sea gate and says, "No, we're not gonna let ya!" And they even take them captive! And for this cruelty and betrayal God really takes it out on Turkey! **Verse 15** – "'For the Day of the LORD upon all nations is near; As you have done, it shall be done to you; …'" – and He talks about wiping out the entire country! A very severe penalty! But, that's the second part of this progression of events.

3) *Notice the next part* is that the Eastern portions of the Islamic confederation seem to have a counter-attack. And I think we read about this in **Revelation chapter 9, verse 13** - "Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, **14**) saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, 'Release ***the four angels*** who are bound at the great river Euphrates.'" – remember, we know from the Book of Daniel that many times angelic beings are in charge, as it were, of different nations. And he seems to say, 'let these four nation groups loose,' **Verse 15** - "…prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind.'" – a terrible bloody battle! And this army end up being comprised of 200 million men! And it seems to me that maybe we have Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Muslim people of India on a counter-attack! They want to get in on this fight! And in the end, they are absorbed by much of this – they are simply destroyed!

4) *Also*, turn to **Revelation chapter 16, verse 12** – "…the sixth angel …" – this is the SEVEN LAST PLAGUES. "…poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared." – so now we have another bloc of nations – another group. And I believe those kings of the east might be, logically, China, countries like Korea, Japan, maybe Indonesia – it has a huge Muslim population. But they decide to get in on this climatic battle! **Verse 14** – "For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, …" – so now this progression has spread to include all of the nations of the world! And this prepares, in **Verse 16**, for the battle which takes place in Armageddon. Or, Megiddo.

View of Rome from the Dome of St. Peter's Basilica on fire!

5) And then *there's another group of people* who are severely afflicted in these end-time events! The great whore – and I'm just quoting the Bible there. **Revelation chapter 17**, he said **Verse 1** – "…'Come, I will show you the judgment of the great [whore] who sits on many waters,…" – a religious institution which has held sway over many people across the earth for a long time! Notice **Verse 16** – "'And the ten horns …" – this is in reference to the European combine. "…'which you saw on the beast, these will hate the [whore], …'" – somewhere as these events progress – remember in the beginning Europe is flying pretty high, its winning battles, its conquering people, its taking territory, its reigning supreme. But somewhere this all of a sudden slows down and things start to turn against Europe. Even they get bloodied! And as their fortunes decline, the hatred that the people have for this great false church grow in intensity. And before its over, as it says, 'they shall hate the whore – "…make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. **17**) For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, …'" – and this whole chapter 18 talks about the great whore being destroyed. You read, Verse 8 – "'Therefore her plagues will come in one day – death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, …'" – and you can read multiple places where it gives the same type of description. Of the great whore – her own historic "mother" countries turn

against her - this universal church. And they just ravish her out of hatred and contempt!

6) And then there's one more group of people. Very small in number, but very significant! Which gets their day of vengeance at the end-time. Notice **Revelation chapter 19, verse 19** – "And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against *His army*.'" – the resurrected saints of Almighty God! **Verse 20** – "Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone." And then, chapter 20, the first three verses gives us the last part of this – total and complete wiping out of evil. When Satan himself and his demons are bound in a great spiritual prison for one-thousand years!

And so this progression, bit by bit. The Book of Revelation gives you the same concept – when it has three seven layer steps.

1. Seven Seals.
2. Seven Trumpets.
3. Seven Last Plagues.

And we know that, prior to the final 3½ years, that the Bible specifically talks about, conditions on the earth becomes increasingly grim and chaotic. We read about that in the "Olivet Prophecy" when Jesus said, 'the end is not yet.' And then He said, 'all these are the beginnings of sorrows.' And this specter of ever-growing calamity, disaster, tragedy, will motivate and galvanize various parts of the world – people throughout the world in various places – to return to their religious roots, their religious heritage, and cause an intensification of religious fervor, passion, zeal and dedication. And over the past several decades we have already seen, and witnessed, a sharp increase in radical jihadist Islam. And here, just recently even at Fort Hood not far away we saw it! And this is only going to grow in scope and intensity!

Biblical prophecy is very clear that the people of Europe return to their historic religion, and even elevate their human leader – the leader of their

church – to a god-like status. And we know from the Book of Daniel that the Jewish people of Jerusalem reinstitute the daily sacrifices. And we know that when those sacrifices are set up and after a while they're taken away – that that's the time of the 'abomination of desolation.' So, I believe this rise in religious zeal and dedication, and the rise of religiously motivated militancy and aggression is indeed the meaning of the FIRST SEAL of Revelation 6. Which says, Verse 2 – "And I looked, and beheld, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, …" – sort-of a religious aura. "…and he went out conquering and to conquer."

And we know that following this first horse, we have the red horse of WAR! The black horse of FAMINE. And the pale horse of DEATH. And these calamities are mentioned in many prophecies! **Jeremiah chapter 14, verse 12** – "…'But I will consume them by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.'" And **Verse 15** He talks about "…'By sword and famine those [false] prophets shall be consumed!'" **Ezekiel chapter 14, verse 21** He talks about 'My four severe judgments … the sword and famine and wild beasts and pestilence.'" And there are so many more!

And, we have long believed and taught that the recipients or the objects of this first wave of these 'days of vengeance' – the days of God's vengeance – will be Israel (meaning Ephraim and Manasseh) and Judah.

But, this begs a question. The only description that we can find in the Bible, in the end times, of *physical* Israel (Ephraim and Manasseh) is of a people who are falling victim to war, famine, pestilence, death and captivity! What happens to *us* between now and then!? Right now in the year 2019, we collectively have the strongest, deadliest, most potent military forces in the history of the world! And yet in the end-time prophetic scenarios we seemingly are helpless, defenseless, unprotected, powerless, impotent. How can this be!? What happens to *us*!? And I think a clue is given to us in the writings of Moses. He says in **Leviticus chapter 1, verses 1 & 2** – "Now the LORD called to Moses, and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting, saying, **2**) '*Speak to the children of Israel*, …'" – I want you to know who these prophecies are talking about. Moses was also a prophet. In **Leviticus chapter 26** – we can go through a lot here, but let's just focus on **Verse 19** – a phrase which has haunted me since I first heard it back in my days at Ambassador College. "'I will break the pride of your power; …'" Well, here in the United States of America, what historically has been the pride of our power!? I have a list of twelve things. You might have one or two different. But you'll get the general idea.

1. One of the great cornerstones of the pride of our power has been our system of government. Based upon the principles of the Constitution. And yet TODAY we have esteemed leaders in Washington, D.C., they would just soon rip that book and throw it away, or put it in the library as a museum piece. It is not a road map for them to follow, it is simply an obstacle that they try and figure how they can wiggle around and squash!

2. The desire of our people to be free of governmental interference. That's why we became a nation! To get away from King George III and the central state. And yet now, we have people who want to just totally be encompassed by the Federal Government. "Run every part of my life! Tell me what I can eat, what I can wear, what I can drive, what type of lightbulb I can put in my house!" Talking about just being overcome by government!

3. The desire of our people to apply their intelligence, their personal initiative, and their effort and hard work to improve their lives and their fortunes, and to provide for themselves and their families. This personal initiative. And yet, we now have whole groups of people with their hands out saying, "Help me! Help me!" "Give me! Give me!" The famous interview, I think that Sean Hannity has played before, this woman wanting, and she's all happy, because the new president Obama, "Well, where's all this money gonna come from!?" She says, "Well, it's just gonna come from his stash!" Have you heard that interview!? You just wanna hold your head and go, "How ignorant are you woman!?"

4. Well another thing that I think has been a great part of our pride and power – economic activity based upon *private* ownership, capitalism, and free market principles. And yet now half of our major corporations seem to be owned or partly owned by the Federal Government. I've heard leading economists say that we are no longer truly a capitalistic society. That we're slowly trending toward a State oriented or ordered society! Much like Moscow wanted for all of those years. And what did it do for the Soviet Union!? They collapsed in utter disarray! And yet we have people who wanna do away with free market and go to just government run.

5. Another idea. Our industrial base and the ability to produce our own goods and products. And yet over the three of four decades we've seen so many of our industries shut down, or sent overseas, to the point where we don't make much of our own stuff anymore. What is going to become of us if we actually need it. I don't look upon China as a friend. Maybe you do. I don't look upon some of those far eastern nations as dedicated allies. And in a time of trouble, we're not gonna have the ability to make things.

6. We had an agricultural base that had the ability to feed and clothe ourselves. And yet, most of the textile mills have shut down, or sent overseas. And even a lot of our food is being regulated by the Federal Government. People in California can't even grow their crops in places

because they're worried about some little minnow in some little drainage ditch. And therefore all water supply is shut off. And, there's story after story like that.

7. The American dream of owning your own home and passing assets down to the next generation. And yet I heard just this morning some commentators say that with the size of the growing government debt, that the people who are now children today, when they're young adults, will be paying 50% in income tax! Just to pay for the debt and the great give away society that we are developing.

8. Also, a sound banking industry. And yet now we hear more and more about government interference and regulation, and government taking over banks. Ordering banks what they can pay their employees. The pay czar.

9. The strength and vitality of our economy and the U.S. Dollar. And folks I'm not an economist, but, when you just start printing money whole hog to pay your debts the value of each dollar starts to shrink. It's called deflation. And you know, that five-hundred thousand dollars you might have stuffed under your mattress, well in a couple of years it'll probably be worth about two-thousand dollars! Just because the value of the dollar. And every time the value of the dollar goes down the price of your gasoline goes up. And everything else you buy overseas. And again, I'm not an economist, but, I know we're going the wrong way! And it's all gonna catch up with us in a year or two. Big time!

10. Energy independence. There was a time, when I was a child, that we in America provided our own energy! But now, they say we can't build nuclear reactors – we can fund them over in Iran, but we can't build them here! We can't mine our coal – when we have vast, hundreds of years' worth supply of coal. But we can't use that, because that produces carbon dioxide. Now, I don't want to shock any of you – but every time you exhale, according to them, you're destroying the Earth! Because that's what we exhale! It's a part of life, and the trees

take it in and change it back to oxygen! God made it that way, but we have these "scientist's" who are trying to make the world believe that somehow exhaling is detrimental to the environment! And, we have people going around thinking that windmills and compact fluorescent energy saving lightbulbs are going to save all of our problems!? That's just complete naiveté.

11. We, historically, have had the best healthcare system in the world! And yet, now, our mental little people of Washington, D.C. are plotting for the Federal Government to take over 1/6 of the American economy!? They can't even run the post office! And yet, they think they can run healthcare! And we are stepping headlong into Socialism!

12. And we have had a very strong and effective decisive military! And the people serving in there, still are! And yet we have leaders who can't make decisions about Afghanistan, or Iraq, or Iran, or North Korea, or Russia – they didn't even know how to deal with Hugo Chávez – that little runt! Over the past several years we have witnessed leaders of our nation traveling around the world and apologizing for our past, and seemingly for our very existence! And yet if it weren't for *us* they would now be speaking German or Japanese! And yet we're supposed to apologize!?

We have seen leaders in the executive branch, and the legislative branch of our federal government attempt to ram through the legislative process and down the throats of the American people - A series of proposals which are more reflective of the liberal socialistic ideals of Western Europe. And observing all that has happened, and all that is proposed, and all that's being said, one has to wonder – if our present-day American leaders would desire someday to secede American sovereignty back over to Mother Europe! It truly makes one wonder! If the United States was amalgamated or assimilated – as it were – into the king of the North (the European combine) it might help to explain some things. Especially when you talk about Biblical prophecy.

Remember, we were told by the man from Chicago, that his goal was to "fundamentally change America." Well, *was* that change something you could believe in!? It was not! And some people reading this right now, would say, "Mike, I don't like what you're saying, you're talking politics! And I don't like it when preachers talk about politics!" Well, in my opinion I'm not talking politics, I'm talking reality! And I'm talking Biblical prophecy! Our nation *is* going down! And there's a reason that it is! And, I think, we're beginning to see how it is happening! Well, whatever and however the politicians say and do, it is always incumbent upon the people of God to remember the Words of Jesus Christ when He says in **Matthew chapter 6, verse 33** – "'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.'" And in **Mark chapter 13** – which *is* one of the very bases of this organization and of our work. He says in **verse 28** – "'Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. **29**) So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near – at the doors! **30**) Assuredly, I say to you, THIS GENERATION ...'" – there was actually going to be a generation that would qualify to be singled out as 'that generation'! I do believe that *we* are that generation! "...'will by no means pass away till all these things take place. **31**) Heaven and earth will pass away, but My Words will by no means pass away. **32**) But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. **33**) Take HEED, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is. **34**) It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch. **35**) Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming – in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning – **36**) lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. **37**) And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!'" And, the same vein over in **Luke chapter 21, verse 36**, Jesus said, "'Watch therefore, and pray always that [1)] you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass [physical salvation], [2)] and to stand before the Son of man [spiritual salvation].'"

Our beloved nation is at a crossroads! Ultimately, however, there is nothing the few of us can do to change it. You and I are powerless, other than prayer. We already know the ending, because we have access to the understanding

of the Book – the Bible. And, as member's of the Church, we are also at a crossroads – as Paul wrote in the Book of **Romans, chapter 13, verse 11** – "And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to AWAKE out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed **12**) The night is far spent, the day …" – and I believe he's talking about the Day of the LORD! – "…is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. **13**) Let us walk [honestly] as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy." – and I still believe that all too often there is strife and envying in the Church of God, and there shouldn't be! And then Paul ends this little section by saying the following – "But put on Jesus Christ!" Because in the end the only hope you have to understand the events which are happening and to have a way of escape is that you are very close to your Savior Jesus Christ! Be thankful to Him and God the Father, because everything you have comes from Them! Your very life, the food you eat, every breath you take, every beating of your heart is at His permission! The knowledge that you have, the calling that you've been given! The fact that you are able to understand the truth of God and the Word of God comes from Them! The fact that you were granted the gift of repentance, and the gift of baptism, and the gift of receiving God's Spirit, and that someday, you too will receive the gift of eternal life! You know, that song, "with his power, with his blood, He has saved me, and with His power He will raise me!"

Be thankful to God and hang on to Him, because that's all we've got!

Owensboro Church of Jesus Christ is based upon the WORD of God, the TRUTH of God, and the PLAN of God. Our mission and our purpose is to follow the admonition of Jesus Christ, when He said, "'FEED MY SHEEP'" We do the will of God the Father and Jesus Christ to preach the Gospel - the good news of Jesus Christ, of His forgiveness, of His atoning sacrifice, of the opportunity for us all to have Jesus Christ as our great High Priest and to live under the promises of the New Covenant, and to someday be a part of the glorious Kingdom of God!

Good News!

ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD!

Michael C. Garrett

11/8/08

On Thursday I went to a place I'd never seen before! A very historic place. *Dealey Plaza* down in downtown Dallas, and the Sixth Floor Museum. Almost forty-five years after that tragedy happened, and I was not prepared for the overwhelming sadness that I was to feel. I had no idea it would affect me I was thirteen years of age back in that November 22, 1963, when we he about John F. Kennedy being shot. I was coming home from

GOD'S CHILDREN ARE OF THE LIGHT!

Michael C. Garrett

12/14/03

Well it's good to be with all of you again ... everything which we are doing, everything which we are producing, is based upon the concept that it will follow the Word of God, the Truth of God, an the Plan of God. We are attempting, to the very best of our ability, to foll the admonition of Jesus Christ when He repeatedly said, "'Feed My she

THE TREASURE OF YOUR HEART

Michael C. Garrett

ite many things about the concept we
rse 1 he said, "The proverbs
know wisdom and
eceive the

THROUGH FAITH, GOD HEALED BUD!

Michael C. Garrett

Let's turn to **2 Corinthians chapter 13, verse 5** –"Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test [or prove] yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you are disqualified."

d I ask the question: By what standard!? By what means and an individual examine and evaluate the condition and the *piritual* health and the level of their *spiritual* maturity!? The iagnostic tool that I can find in the Bible is from the Words **Matthew chapter 7**, where He said, **verse 16** – "'You their fruits.'" And then in **Verse 20**, He says again, ruits you will know them.'"

Galatians chapter 5, and spoke about the 'works of the end, we spoke about Galatians chapter 5, verses 23- Spirit.' Now, Mr. Herbert Armstrong, gave the ve this many times – as an out-going concern, as ncern. Are you thinking about others, or are you ery simple formula. And I think it was a very **oy**, just the fact that you can be in such an evil times and still have the joy of God percolate gh you and – what a wonderful thing to have! n to **Philippians chapter 4** – there's a **Verse 4** – "Rejoice in the Lord always. sometimes, as the people of God, forget heavy laden with all of the news of the ns, situations within our families and l all the things that we start to worry nd that in the end The Anchor Holds, us!

WHO ARE THE 144,000?

Michael C. Garrett

www.owensborochurchofjesuschrist.com

Revelation chapter 7 – the past few sermons – and to tell you the truth, they've all been a part of a series – about 4 sermons ago there was a program entitled "Few Are Chosen," and I tried to point out in that message that no one comes to Jesus unless their called by God the Father. That's what Jesus told us in the Book of John. And we read many examples where the idea of you being called, or invited, or chosen, or elected, or selected, that *that* is a Biblical statement.

And then, we eventually talked about pillars in the Kingdom of God. And I mentioned that the very first most important, biggest, strongest, pillar of them all is Jesus Christ! And with that, God the Father!